

his way up to become a journeyman and master electrician.

Madam Speaker, these are just two examples of Florida's nearly 2 million small businesses that have provided economic opportunities to diverse groups of people and have delivered innovative products and services to a worldwide marketplace.

Florida's small employers, in 2006, represented 99 percent of the State's employers and 44 percent of its private sector employment. Of even greater significance, however, is that small businesses created nearly 60 percent of my State's new jobs in recent years. Think of that figure. Sixty percent of the new jobs in the State of Florida were created by small businesses.

It is my honor and my privilege to recognize today the many dedicated and hardworking employees of small businesses who have done so much over the years to serve their neighbors in so many ways.

JULY 2011 IS NOT SOON ENOUGH: ACCELERATE TROOP REDEPLOYMENT OUT OF AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, General Petraeus was in Washington this week to testify before the House and Senate Armed Services Committee. And while his intent was to endorse the July 2011 Afghanistan redeployment date set by the Commander in Chief, it was not the kind of clear, unambiguous statement that inspires very much confidence.

According to an editorial in today's Washington Post, the General describes next July as "the point at which a process begins to transition security tasks to Afghan forces at a rate to be determined by conditions at the time." With all due respect, Madam Speaker, could there be any more qualifiers and escape hatches in that sentence?

The American people, who have 1,000 fewer fellow citizens and 278 billion fewer dollars than they did when this war began, aren't looking for the beginning of a process. They're looking for an end to this, an end to this miserable war.

Shouldn't we be at the end or at least in the middle of the process of transitioning security tasks to Afghanistan forces? Shouldn't the beginning of the process have come at some point over the last 8½ years that we've been fighting this war?

My concern, Madam Speaker, is that statements like this one are laying the predicate for an extension of President Obama's deadline, which is exactly the wrong lesson and the wrong approach. The problem is that, if you're locked into a certain mindset, it will never seem like the right moment to remove our troops from Afghanistan, because the mission as currently defined will never be complete and conditions on

the ground will forever remain bad. But the reason for that is the underlying policy of a military invasion and occupation that is fatally flawed in the first place.

So, in a twisted, paradoxical way, Madam Speaker, the more we fail, the more we try to succeed with the same misguided approach, and then we just fail some more. That's how you end up with perpetual war. If we had adopted smart security principles and invested in a humanitarian rather than a military approach, we'd be a lot closer to our goals of a peaceful, stable, and secure Afghanistan.

For my part, Madam Speaker—and I am not alone in this belief—the July 2011 date is not nearly ambitious enough. That's yet one more year in which Americans will be asked to sacrifice blood and treasure for a failed counterterrorism strategy that is doing nothing to advance our national security objectives. I believe General Petraeus is moving in the wrong direction and being cautious where he should be bold. It's time to accelerate the timetable, not push it back. It's time, Madam Speaker, to bring our troops home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HELP FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, we have the highest number of long-term unemployed Americans ever on record, so you'd think we'd be overwhelmed by bipartisan cooperation to help us with these 7 million people who have been out of work for more than 6 months. Instead, every single House Republican but one voted against the legislation 3 weeks ago to continue emergency Federal unemployment benefits. And now, in the other body, every Republican has refused to support an extension of unemployment benefits. So a growing number of jobless workers are now losing their benefits.

By the end of this week, more than 900,000 Americans will lose their unemployment benefits unless the other body acts. We hear their rumblings over there, but I'll believe it when I see it. By the end of the month, the number will grow to 1.2 million. My colleagues from Florida should know an estimated 80,000 Floridians will lose their benefits; California, 180,000; Ohio, 66,000; Georgia, 57,000. And the list goes on and on.

The last lifeline for these workers and their families is being severed,

leaving them adrift with no job, no savings, and no support. Even some from my own party seem to be saying now is the time to start cutting back on help for the unemployed. In fact, it will take about 5 years of consistent, month-after-month job growth to make up for all the ground we have lost in this recession. That's how big the jobs hole is that unemployed workers are trying to climb out of.

You only have to hear from a few unemployed workers to know how hard they're looking for work and to feel their sheer sense of desperation. They're losing their homes, their health, and their faith in the American Dream. Are we really prepared to just stand by and watch them sink into abject poverty?

Opponents of helping the unemployed like to talk about budget deficits. Of course, they don't seem to care about deficits when it comes to two wars that have cost a trillion dollars and two tax cuts, mainly for the wealthy, which cost \$1.7 trillion. None of that seems to matter. But now the stingy other body says we might pass this if we can take away \$25 a week from all the unemployed. Of course, we couldn't take the money from the hedge fund people. That would be too tough on them. When it comes to helping the unemployed, they just say, We can't afford it. But I wonder if they have truly considered the real cost of abandoning these families.

Ending assistance to the unemployed will reduce consumer demand right at the point when the economy is struggling to rebound after the worst recession in 70 years. It would surely increase the number of homes that would go into foreclosure. And it would drive some individuals permanently out of the labor force if we don't do something. All these outcomes will increase our Nation's budget deficit. But even worse, they'll bring about a crippling deficit of hope—hope for the future.

Helping those who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own is the right thing to do for families, for the economy, and, ultimately, for the Federal budget.

Our failure to get this bill passed has very real and very immediate consequences. Tonight, thousands of people in every corner of this country will suffer because we have chosen to quibble and stonewall instead of act. These benefits help millions of people put bread on the table while they look for work. I sincerely hope the other body will take pity on the unemployed of this country and pass a bill today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)